2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

squirmed away. The last of the snakes had young in her body and was slow to come to life. The woman blew the black root on the snake several times, and each time the snake gave birth to a young snake until all were born. The old man and woman then instructed Stays Yellow that she could doctor women when they had difficulty bearing children. My mother never killed snakes after that; she always blew some of the medicine root on any snake near our lodge and then carried it away.

My mother's mother, Coyote Woman, lived with her husband between the Knife and the Heart rivers.[6] He was very mean to her and beat her a great deal. He sent her out every morning at daylight to see if there were any animals in their pits. One day there was a large wolf in one of the pits.

The wolf said, "Take me out, and I will give you power to do anything you ask."

Coyote Woman did not know what to do because she was afraid of her husband. The wolf knew her thoughts. He coughed up a blue stone.

"Take that stone and use it among your people," he said. "If you use it, you will stay awake all night just like the wolves do." She took the stone and let the wolf out.

From fear of her husband, she told him what had happened. The old man was very cross and inquired how much power the wolf gave her. She showed him the blue stone, and the old man took it away from her.

When the wolf gave her the stone he had said, "If anybody in your tribe is mean to you and you want to get rid of him, cut out an image of him in leather, put the stone beside the image, and cover both with hot ashes. Then the person will die."

She told all this to her husband. She had had another husband when she was young, and the old man immediately put a piece of hide cut out in the shape of the other man together with the blue stone into the ashes, calling the other man's name. That night the old man and his wife could not sleep. The next morning the woman's first husband died. She knew that she would have to get the stone away from her husband or he would kill half the tribe, so she stole the stone. When he missed the stone, he beat her; then he took her to the prairie where he drove down four posts, tying her arms and legs each to a post. In the night the wolf came and chewed off all the straps, thus setting her free.[7]

The Wolf said, "Any time you want to know anything, come out on the hills and I will tell you."

She went home and slept during the day. A large bear came to her and said, "You are having a hard time. From now on, you must go among your people doctoring. People will give you white buffalo robes, leggings, dresses, and moccasins, for you will cure all who ask your help."

Then the wolf came to her in her dream and said, "Tell your husband to go on the warpath. The first time the wolves will send him good luck and all the people will praise him; the second time he won't come back, for the wolves will eat him."

He did as she said. The second time he did not come back. After ten days,

6. This was the village of the Awigaxa and Istopa bands.

7. This suggests Hidatsa beliefs concerning wolves. See "Wolf Ceremonies" in Bowers, "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization" (Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, MS).